

## OPPOSITION TO MADERA RANCH UNDERGROUND WATERBANK

September 23, 1998

### Dear Concerned Landowner:

Several years ago, Heber Perrett, the owner of the 13,600 acre ranch called Madera Ranch (formerly known as the El Peco Ranch), made a proposal to build and operate a water recharge and extraction facility just west of Madera to the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. Mr. Perrett, proposes to use his and our underlying aquifer for developing an underground water bank. As much as 400 cfs (cubic feet per second) would be diverted from the Mendota Pool on the San Joaquin River through a proposed new canal to the Madera Ranch, with as much as 390,000 acre feet (Millerton Lake is 520,000 acre feet when full) being stored. Water would be pumped out of the underground aquifer bank and returned to the Mendota Pool via the canal for future use by large metropolitan areas and Westside farmers.

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Bureau) has completed a Phase I evaluation of the Project as of May, 1998 which analyzes the technical feasibility at ONLY an appraisal level. The geologic and hydrologic investigation and documentation which form the basis of the Phase I Report was developed by engineers of Bookman-Edmonston and paid for by Heber Perrett. With only this limited level of technical feasibility, the Bureau is trying to PURCHASE the Madera Ranch right now with the plan to do a more complete feasibility study later. The Phase I Report shows:

### GROUNDWATER LEVELS WILL BE LOWERED!

During the time period of the recent drought, the Bureau's Report shows that groundwater levels would have been over 30 - 80 feet lower had the project been in place. Furthermore, at this time there is no guarantee as to HOW MUCH the Bureau will pump out of the ground.

### QUALITY OF WATER PUT INTO BANK IS QUESTIONABLE!

The Bureau proposes to bring water from the Mendota Pool which is poor quality water and put into our groundwater system which has good water. Furthermore, the alkali in the soils of Madera Ranch will only make the water more salty as it goes into the ground.

### WATER PUT INTO THE GROUND IS NOT THE WATER TAKEN OUT!

The geologists' tests can not demonstrate that the water will seep down below the A-Clay layer. However, the Bureau will be pumping out OUR high quality groundwater below this layer leaving the low quality Mendota Pool water behind to perch existing neighboring crops. Their Report even states "that the water withdrawn is not in all cases the same water that has been recharged."

Given the information, we are OPPOSED to the Madera Ranch Project. The Bureau is trying to PURCHASE this property now before they have completed a comprehensive hydrological, economical and environmental studies. This is a waste of taxpayer money! It is CRITICAL that you contact George Radanovich at (202) 225-4540, Dianne Feinstein at (202) 224-3841 and Barbara Boxer at (202) 224-3553 to voice your opposition. Please contact your water district and let them know that you want your water supply and quality protected.

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